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UNCLAS ANKARA 006769

SIPDIS

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SUBJECT: TURKEY URGES ALL IRAQIS TO PARTICIPATE IN JAN. 30 ELECTIONS

REF: STATE 254809

1. When on Dec. 3 PolMilOff called on the MFA Iraq Desk to discuss Iraqi elections (reftel), we were provided an MFA press statement that was to be released the same day. COMMENT: We see the statement as offering Turkey's full support for Jan. 30 elections taking place with all Iraqis' full participation. END COMMENT.

2. Begin text of informal embassy translation of statement:

The contacts that were held with Iraqi Interim Government Vice President Ibrahim Jafari on Dec. 1-2 in Ankara were useful. The visit of the Iraqi Vice President was even more important as it coincides with a period during which preparations for January 30, 2005 general elections are heightened.

Our Prime Minister and Foreign Minister once again stressed to their Iraqi guests Turkey's principled and clear policy regarding the transformation process in Iraq. The Iraqi Vice President expressed that Turkey's approach without ill intentions regarding Iraq helps to assure Iraq's own success.

As it has been so far, Turkey in the coming period will preserve its close contact with the Iraqi Interim Government as well as with all political and social sectors composing Iraq and will continue its friendly recommendations.

Turkey does not have a special agenda concerning Iraq, and it approaches all sectors in Iraq with the same goodwill. The sensitivities that Turkey has been voicing and will continue to voice are solely directed to support the goal of Iraq's preparing its own future in unity and by achieving harmony among all groups. One particular group's feeling itself being under pressure or being isolated by another will make this harmony difficult. Similarly, one particular group's demands and aspirations that would go beyond the common agenda of Iraq will also harm the common goal.

A two-month period is left for trying to hold the first real free elections in Iraqi history. The end of the period for the registration of candidates and coalitions for the election to a 275-member Assembly and Governorate Councils is approaching. The Iraqis must act by thinking about their future. The pain and distress that are being lived through today and the feeling of isolation should not be allowed to take the future away from the people.

The rules of the game in Iraq have changed and the way to make one's voice heard and safeguard one's interests is through the democratic process. Those who attach hopes to other methods will see that they will not yield results and they will lose valuable time in the election process. Iraq does not have any alternative other than a new constitutional order which will be established with the full participation of all sectors, and which will guarantee its national integrity. All Iraqis should be included in this path. Turkey is on the side of those who take this path.

END TEXT.

3. Baghdad minimize considered.
EDELMAN